Ottawa metro

Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, MARCH 18-20, 2016 | High 1°C/Low -13°C Windy!

MOVIES

Divergent is proof big brands outshine big names at box office

metroLIFE

Ottawa police officers at 90 Sparks St.
EMMA JACKSON/METRO

TRAGEDY

Ottawa Mountie dies of apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound

metroNEWS

BUDGET LEAK

Big win for cities

Billions pledged for social, green infrastructure projects, transit

Ottawa appears ready to boost its share of the funding it provides municipalities as it looks to fast-track an infrastructure spending spree, Torstar News Service has learned.

Finance Minister Bill Morneau will take the wraps off the Liberals' first budget on Tuesday.

And sources say municipal officials can expect good news on two fronts: A change to the traditional one-third funding formula — at least for some projects — and financial help for the prep work needed to get those infrastructure projects off the ground.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Thursday previewed the upcoming fiscal blueprint, saying his government has chosen "investment" over "austerity."

Trudeau also confirmed that the Liberals will use the upcoming budget to roll back the age of eligibility for Old Age Security payments to 65 from 67 as promised, reversing a change introduced by the previous Conservative government.

The Liberals pledged a big hike in infrastructure funding during last year's election campaign — an extra $60 billion over the coming decade. The budget will detail the government's plan to roll out the cash in two phases.

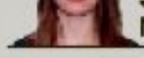
The initial phase, to be stretched over two years, will allow infrastructure cash to be spent on existing projects. Billed as "recapitalization," it will enable municipalities to tackle a backlog of unfunded work.

Trudeau confirmed Thursday that the government's initial focus will be on funding repairs to existing infrastructure.

"The first two years, we're going to do the unsexy things that governments hate to announce, recapitalization of infrastructure, maintenance, upgrades, the things that you don't get to cut a ribbon and announce a shiny new building on," the prime minister said in an interview with Bloomberg.

Typically, the cost of infrastructure has been split equally between municipalities, provinces and the federal government. But municipal leaders have appealed to the federal government to consider paying a greater share — up to 50 per cent — with the provinces paying around 33 per cent and municipalities on the hook for 20 per cent. It appears that appeal has hit home, with one source saying the one-third funding formula is a "thing of the past." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ottawa mayor stays mum



Lucy Scholey
Metro | Ottawa

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson wouldn't bite on word the Liberals plan to boost the federal government's share of funding for infrastructure projects.

A massive increase in federal funding would have implications for local Ottawa projects awaiting shovels in the ground — but it's still unclear how.

Typical of most municipal infrastructure projects, the City of Ottawa's plan for phase two of light rail includes an equal share of $1 billion in funds from all three levels of government. If the Liberals change the funding formula — to 50 per cent of federal investment in projects — how would that impact the LRT? Would the city foot the rest of the $3-billion cost or would the province still be expected to pitch in?

Whatever the funding formal, all city mayors will be eyeing the federal budget for a bigger share of federal dollars in municipal infrastructure this year.

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Spotlight on Cuba: How Canada made the Cuba-U.S. meeting happen. **World**

POLICE

Chief responds to email diatribe

Joe Lofaro
Metro | Ottawa

Two days after a rogue police constable openly criticized the leadership of the Ottawa Police Service in an internal email, Chief Charles Bordeleau said he was forced to respond with another mass email to the entire force to assure members he's willing to hear their concerns.

"I was getting calls from our own members, saying, 'Can you respond to this?' Some people were upset about the email as well," said Bordeleau on Thursday.

Veteran police officer Const. Paul Heffler emailed the entire police service on Monday, calling out what he described as a "corrupt" police culture that has long forgotten patrol and instead support a perceived "inbred system of self-promotion."

The email came hours after the chief released an open letter to residents asking them for support in solving an increase in gun violence so far this year.

Bordeleau, whom Metro has been asking to speak to since Monday night, said Thursday there are several ways officers can air their grievances, but the mass distribution list is not one of them.

"It's not the first time (Const. Heffler) has used that venue to express his frustration," he said during an interview at an east-end Starbucks. "As chief of police, I expect to get criticized, and that's part of the job."

Bordeleau wouldn't comment on potential disciplinary action against Heffler, saying only he will "deal with it."

Bordeleau pointed to the scrapped tenure program and changes to the vehicle fleet as evidence the police leadership is actively listening to officers.

While a 2015 internal survey reportedly found morale was low and officers lacked confidence in police executives, Bordeleau said it is other factors that are contributing to frustration.

"They're feeling the pressures, the scrutiny, the oversight, the questioning; you've got the video cameras out there. It takes a toll on our people."

Startup in financial fix

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Fitness-device company out of cash, owes $1.9 million

Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

An Ottawa company heralded for its potential in designing a high-tech wearable for fitness junkies has filed for bankruptcy protection.

"It's taking a toll from every angle," said GestureLogic Inc. founder Leonard MacEachern. "Disappointment would be an understatement."

Since it was founded in 2013, the company has received plenty of attention and accolades for LEO, a high-tech monitor that measures everything from an athlete's heartbeat to hydration levels via a fabric band worn around the thigh.

Early investments included $250,000 from Carleton University chancellor Charles Chi and another $250,000 from the Ontario Centres of Excellence.

> **Disappointment would be an understatement.**
> Leonard MacEachern

The product had an expected release of April 2014, but MacEachern said the company ran into manufacturing complications. Court documents indicate that at least $1.5 million would have been needed to bring the product to market, but when they approached investors for a second round of funding, support dried up.

"Most wearable companies are raising in the order of $10 million. We didn't raise that amount; it was mostly angel investments and friends and family," said MacEachern.

On Wednesday, an Ottawa judge granted the company time to sell their intellectual property, which could help cover the $1.9 million owed to investors.

A more complicated legal situation is the company's 2014 crowdfunding campaign that raised $143,709 in two months.

Even the lower tiers of the campaign were significant investments: more than a hundred people paid between $184 and $369 in exchange for a discount on a product they aren't likely to see.

"It has been extremely frustrating, both the lack of progress and updates," said Steve Spaulding, a contributor from the U.S. "I don't have that type of money to just throw away without getting what I expected to be paying for."

ST. PATRICK'S PINTS AND PARADE Paul Akehurst, his fiancée Kim Morissette and her sister Caroline channelled the luck o' the Irish at Heart and Crown pub during St. Patrick's Day on Thursday. The party's not over: The annual parade will head west on Laurier and then south on Bank to Lansdowne Park on Saturday. EMMA JACKSON/METRO

Bridlewood traffic petition 'futile,' councillor says

Bridlewood residents hope to move a years-long struggle into the fast lane with a petition, boasting more than 200 signatures, to make an intersection safer.

But their efforts are in vain, said Kanata South Coun. Allan Hubley, who said he too has been working on a solution for the intersection at Stonehaven Drive and Sawyer Way for years.

"There is nothing that can happen, even if there are 10,000 signatures on that petition," he said. "This petition is actually futile."

The petition, started by nearby resident Dave Dunn, asks that a four-way stop or roundabout be installed. The problem, which Dunn outlines on the petition's web page, is the "constant flow of traffic from Old Richmond Road" coming onto Stonehaven, which makes turning onto Stonehaven from Sawyer Way difficult and dangerous, he said.

Dunn said in an interview he has had to change his work shift so he doesn't end up waiting to turn during the morning rush for so long he ends up late.

But all that doesn't warrant the installation of stop signs, according to provincial law, said Hubley.

"The province sets warrants or standards as to how much traffic there has to be at an intersection before they will let you put up a stop sign, and this intersection does not meet those warrants," he said. "There are not enough cars coming out of Sawyer Way to warrant the stopping of the traffic on Stonehaven."

He bases that assessment on many studies that have been carried out on the intersection, he said.

However, according to an Ontario Ministry of Transportation spokesperson, the traffic-flow numbers are not part of legislation — they are only guidelines.

However, in a subsequent interview, Hubley said "every single municipality (in Ontario) follows (the provincial guidelines)."

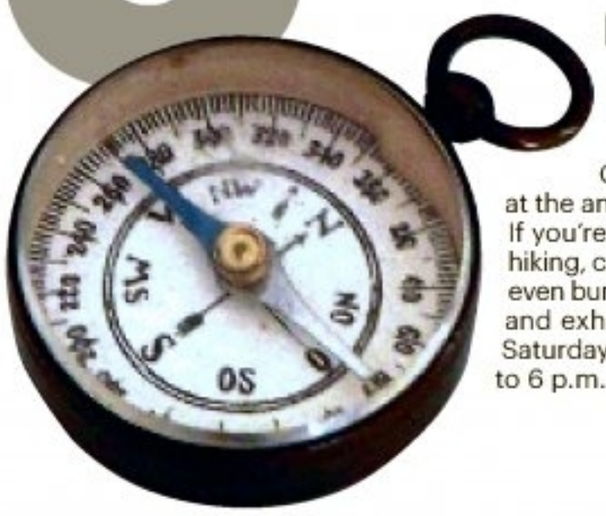
Instead, Hubley said traffic experts "foresee (the intersection) fixing itself in the future," once a roundabout is installed at Old Richmond Road and Stonehaven Drive. That construction is expected to start in 2018.

ADAM KVETON/METROLAND MEDIA

5 THINGS TO DO IN OTTAWA THIS WEEKEND

There's a little something for everyone this weekend: green beer, green thumbs, outdoor adventures and artisanal Easter eggs.

Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa



1 Outdoor and Adventure Expo (all weekend)

Get ready to plan some summer adventures at the annual Outdoor and Adventure Travel Show. If you're interested in camping, kayaking, cycling, hiking, canoeing, photography, environmentalism or even bungee jumping you'll likely find a presentation and exhibitors that interest you. The show starts Saturday and Sunday at the EY Centre from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tickets are $12 at the door.

4 Ottawa-Gatineau International Auto Show (all weekend)

If you love cars and motorcycles, then the annual Auto Show at the Shaw Convention Centre is not to be missed. The show is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Thursday to Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. There will be exotic cars, giveaways and a brand new motorcycle showcase with more than 100 vehicles on display. Tickets are $18 at the door.

2 Ottawa Orchid Society's annual auction (Sunday)

It's time to get ready for spring gardening — this weekend focus on the elegant orchid with the Ottawa Orchid Society's annual auction. There will be many plants themselves on offer, but also pots, equipment, lights and books. The fundraiser takes place at the Tom Brown Arena, 141 Bayview Rd., starting at 1:30 p.m.

3 St. Patrick's Day Parade (Saturday)

Hopefully you had your fill of green beer on Thursday and have had time to recover, because the Irish-themed fun doesn't stop yet. Saturday's main event is the 34th annual St. Patrick's Day Parade starting at 11 a.m. at the corner of Elgin Street and Laurier Avenue. The route travels down Bank Street to end at Lansdowne Park and volunteers will be collecting donations for the Ottawa Food Bank. Earlier in the morning the annual St. Patrick's Day 10K starts at 9:15 a.m. at Immaculata High School. Registration starts at 7:30 a.m. and costs $25.

5 Ukrainian Easter Bazaar (Sunday)

Easter is an important day in Ukraine, usually celebrated a bit later than it is in North America. To find out more, head to the Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral church hall, 1000 Byron Ave., Sunday from 12 to 2:30 p.m. for the Ukrainian Easter Bazaar. There will be Ukrainian cuisine and baked goods, handicrafts and embroidery and dyes for pysanky (a truly unique and beautiful method of painting Easter eggs). Admission is free.

Police stand behind a taped-off area after a RCMP officer was found shot dead in a building below Parliament Hill on Thursday. FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tragedy on the Hill

POLICE

RCMP officer apparently dies of self-inflicted gunshot wound

Lucy Scholey
Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

An RCMP officer has died after apparently shooting himself Thursday morning in a Sparks Street building just steps from Parliament Hill and less than a block away from the prime minister's Langevin Block office, sources say.

Ottawa police — who have yet to confirm those details — said their officers rushed to the scene for a "medical call."

Const. Marc Soucy said the call came in at 8:55 a.m. for an emergency at 90 Sparks St., the Thomas D'Arcy McGee Building. He would only say a person had been taken to hospital.

"We're not looking for suspect and there's no danger to the public," Soucy said. Up to 10 police vehicles were positioned around the building, which borders Metcalfe, Queen and Sparks streets.

The RCMP later tweeted the force had lost one of its own.

Paramedics spokesperson JP Trottier said his team "responded to a call near that area earlier this morning" and a person was taken to hospital.

He wouldn't comment on the person's injuries, saying the investigation is in the hands of the police.

Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale also offered his sympathies.

"Deep condolences to the family of the RCMP officer who died on duty in Ottawa this morning, and to the Force. Our prayers are with them," he wrote on Twitter.

Police also cordoned off the Metcalfe side of the building, at No. 33. An investigator took photos of the side entrance and an RCMP vehicle that was parked on scene. Eventually, a tow truck picked up that car.

Ottawa Police Chief Charles Bordeleau pulled up on the Metcalfe side of the building in a white SUV. He got out and shook hands with the two RCMP officers and OPS officer before driving off without speaking to the media.

In September 2014, one of Bordeleau's own officers, Kal Ghadban, took his own life at police headquarters. WITH FILES FROM TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MECHANICSVILLE

Homeless housing complex raises questions

Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

Mechanicsville residents are looking for answers as the John Howard Society of Ottawa plans a five-storey supportive housing complex for Carruthers Avenue.

Last December, the charitable organization won $3.9 million in city funding to build the $9-million, 36-unit apartment complex for chronically homeless residents.

The announcement caught the community off guard, said Mechanicsville Community Association past president Blair Simser.

"They'd already bought the place and gotten funding from the government before they even came to us," Simser said.

Executive director Don Wadel said that's because the city's bid process is confidential.

He's catching up now: Wadel's hosting a joint meeting with Kitchissippi Coun. Jeff Leiper on April 11 to clear up any misconceptions.

Since John Howard is involved, residents have wrongly assumed the apartment is for convicts.

"They were in a shelter, not a jail," Wadel said.

The small neighbourhood already has "a heck of a lot" of social services. Ottawa Community Housing runs an emergency family shelter on Forward Avenue, and the Youth Services Bureau has a 19-unit residential building nearby.

"It's not an issue unless you have too much of it," Simser said.

But Leiper bristled at the suggestion that community housing means trouble.

"I do take exception to classifying the residents in this building as somehow different," Leiper said. "People are people."

The building will have full-time staff present at all hours, Wadel said. He expects the building to open next summer.

EQUALITY

Young women invited to firefighting training camp

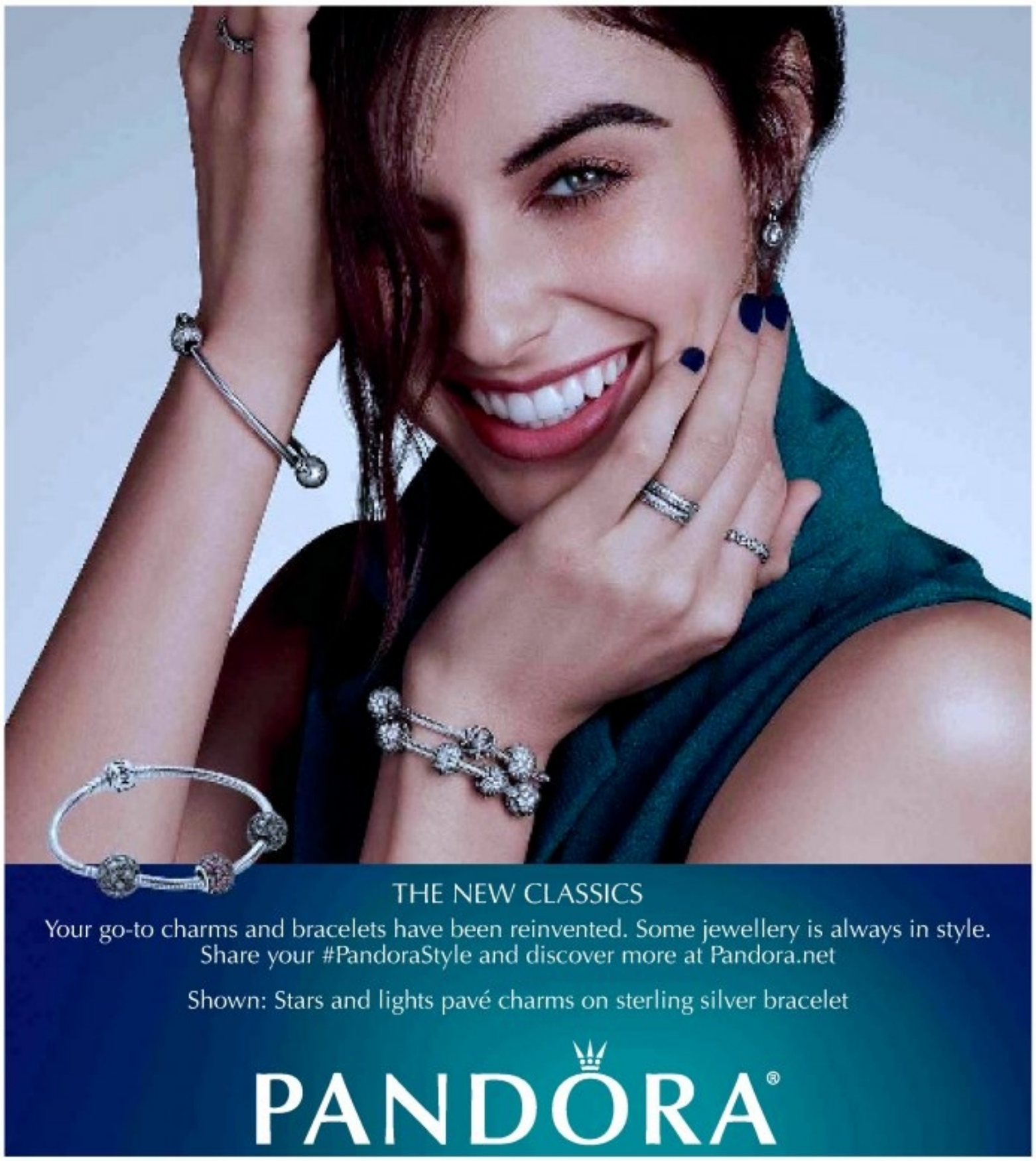
Young women wanting to learn what it takes to fight fires and save lives have the chance to find out.

Ottawa's fire department is now accepting applications for the seventh-annual Female Firefighters in Training (FFIT) camp, which is set to take place Aug. 8 to 12 at the training centre on Industrial Avenue.

Camp FFIT is open to females aged 15 to 19. In order to be accepted into the program, which costs $150, participants must be in good physical condition and have a positive attitude.

For questions, email campffit@ottawa.ca, or call the training centre at 613-580-2424, ext. 28058.

ERIN MCCRACKEN/METROLAND MEDIA



Court OKs doctor-assisted death

Justice Paul Perell
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

PRECEDENT

Judge agrees to terminally ill man's request to end his life

An Ontario judge has agreed to allow a terminally-ill man to have doctors help him die, likely this weekend.

Superior Court Justice Paul Perell gave the green light after a 30-minute hearing yesterday.

Perell also agreed there would be no need to notify the coroner after the man, who cannot be identified, dies.

Neither the federal nor provincial government opposed the man's request.

It's the first case in Ontario — and the third in Canada outside Quebec — in which someone has sought an exemption to Criminal Code provisions on assisted suicide under a recent Supreme Court of Canada ruling.

Quebec has its own legislative regime on the matter.

The 81-year-old man was diagnosed in 2012 with lymphoma and is essentially bed-ridden and in unbearable pain.

"I grant the application," Perell said, giving lengthy reasons for his decision, which included running through the Supreme Court's rulings on the issue.

He said the married grandfather's condition and circumstances meet all the criteria for the exemption.

Those include his being mentally competent, in extreme pain, and making the assisted-death request without coercion or manipulation.

The judge also noted the man's family and doctors support his request.

Last year, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down laws that bar doctors from helping someone die, but put the ruling on hold for one year.

In February, the court granted the government a four-month extension, but said the terminally ill could ask the courts for an exemption to the ban during that period.

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POLICE

Reporter learns risk of 'drugged driving'

Joe Lofaro
Metro | Ottawa

It's not surprising that feeling supremely stoned in front of two uniformed police officers is a truly embarrassing feeling.

Yet that's exactly how I felt Thursday when Ottawa Police Const. TJ Jellinek was instructing me to walk toe-to-toe in a straight line while counting out loud at the Shaw Centre.

Ottawa police officers were at the Ottawa-Gatineau International Auto Show to give live demonstrations of a drugged driving simulation suit designed by Ford to show what it's like to operate a vehicle while impaired by cannabis, LSD, cocaine, ecstasy, or heroin.

Police hope the simulation at the popular show will draw attention to the dangers of driving while impaired on drugs — what Sgt. John Kiss calls "an emerging trend."

"The kids all get drunk driving is dangerous," said Kiss, who heads the Ottawa Police Impaired Driving Counter Measures Program.

"'What's the matter? Have a toke. Drive. It loosens me up. I'm more relaxed. I can drive better when I'm stoned.' This is the stuff we're hearing. It's incredible."

At the Ford exhibit, officers have guests walk along a yellow strip of tape while counting out loud and then return to the beginning point, lift one leg, and count again.

Repeating the two exercises wearing Velcro body weights, distorted vision goggles, and headphones is no simple task. It replicates slowed reaction time, impaired judgment, confusion, blurred vision — all side effects of taking illicit drugs.

Kiss said whether it's alcohol or drugs, officers look for signs a driver is impaired, such as glossy or bloodshot eyes, slurred speech, and confusion.

"What we see (here) is exactly what we see when we see actual impaired drivers," said Kiss.

Metro's Joe Lofaro tries out the drugged driving simulation suit. JOHN KISS/OTTAWA POLICE

ON THE ROADS

Airport Parkway on-ramp closed until Saturday

If you're planning on taking the northbound on-ramp to the Airport Parkway at Hunt Club Road tonight, you'll need to make other plans.

The on-ramp will be closed tonight from 8 p.m. through Saturday morning at 10 a.m. for construction.

There may need to be more weekend closures for construction, depending on the state of the culvert being repaired.

Detours will be in place to redirect traffic from Hunt Club Road to Riverside Drive, to Brookfield Road and alternatively down Bank Street.

But if you're going to the airport, don't worry – your trip won't be affected.

METRO

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Exclusively ours

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Our line of affordable men's basics includes T-shirts *($12.99 or two for $20)* and shorts *($24.99 or two for $40)* that are sure to be summer staples.

Exclusively ours

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Go bright and bold this summer in Design Lab's debut swimwear line—an assortment of maillots, tankinis, mix-and-match tops and bottoms—which feature splashy colours, pretty prints, and flirty details like cutouts and ruffle trim *(from $44 – $98)*.

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MARTHA STEWART COLLECTION BEDDING

Martha Stewart's bedding is a reflection of the lifestyle maven's taste and style. The mix-and-match Whim line *(five-piece twin comforter set, $160)* is bright, cheerful and, dare we say, dreamy.

Exclusively ours

1670

Our recently launched collection of slim suit separates *(jacket, $129.99; pant, $69.99)* now features dress shirts *($29.99)* and coordinating neckwear *($14.99)*.

HUDSON'S BAY

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Big Rig Brewery has been keeping Ottawa stocked with bock through the seasons.
COURTESY BIG RIG BREWERY

Spring is bock at Ottawa breweries

BEVERAGE

Beer brewed by monks for pre-Easter period of Lent

Jordan Duff
For Metro | Ottawa

Spring is a transitional season. The optimism fueled by warming sunlight is tempered by constantly wet shoes. This is especially true in Ottawa, where the pent-up desire for warmer weather is unleashed on local patios as soon as the weather becomes less than dangerously cold.

The bock style of beer, a heavier German styled lager, is the perfect liquid analogy for this transition: It's weighty enough to shake the winter chill while the uplifting sweet notes promise warmer times.

As legend (or the Internet) would have it, this particular style of beer was originally brewed in the German town of Einbeck. From a mispronounced and shortened Einbeck, beck became bock.

In the bustling 1600s, monks would brew this beer specially for the pre-Easter period of Lent, a time of penance and reflection. Because they were expected to fast over this religious period, the monks brewed a beer with a heavier malt-bill that was more filling and calorie-rich to help them through the lean times ahead.

Over the years, these trailblazing monks began to develop a moral hangover. They worried that their delicious malt-forward bock brew was, perhaps, too good for these 40 days of atonement. So, they penned a letter explaining their predicament, barreled up a batch of beer and had it all sent to the pope in Rome for his judgement.

As luck, or divine intervention, would have it, the beer's quality suffered greatly during the lengthy journey through various climates, temperatures and elevations. The sample that arrived at the pope's table was a soured rotten beer that was, rightly, found to be disgusting. Believing that drinking this horrible concoction would be an excellent form of penance, the Pope sent word back to the German monks to inform them that their beer held an appropriate level of suffering for this time of year. With that, history had its first ever beer review (*facts unconfirmed).

Thankfully, you don't have to be of the holy order to drink a good beer. Big Rig Brewery has been keeping Ottawa stocked with bock through the seasons. Currently, they have one style winding down and another on deck.

Clearly, brewmaster Lon Ladell is a fan: "It's a classic style I've always enjoyed.... It's the perfect transitional beer — balancing a light touch of alcohol heat for cooler spring nights, but still refreshing and thirst-quenching for afternoons on the patio." Perfectly said.

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

More to spring than bocks

Cassel Brewery is releasing Switchman doppelbock on March 25, in collaboration with Adam Olsen of Torque Brewery in Manitoba. Olsen won the doppelbock category at the National Capital Homebrew challenge, thereby winning the opportunity to brew with Cassel Brewery. Switchman promises a rich full body, dark fruits and a beefy 7.8 per cent.

Tooth and Nail brewed a bock with a name that will be fun to order: Horn Banger. Named for the battling billy goats that symbolize this style, this deep brown lager would do the monks proud with its nod to German heritage.

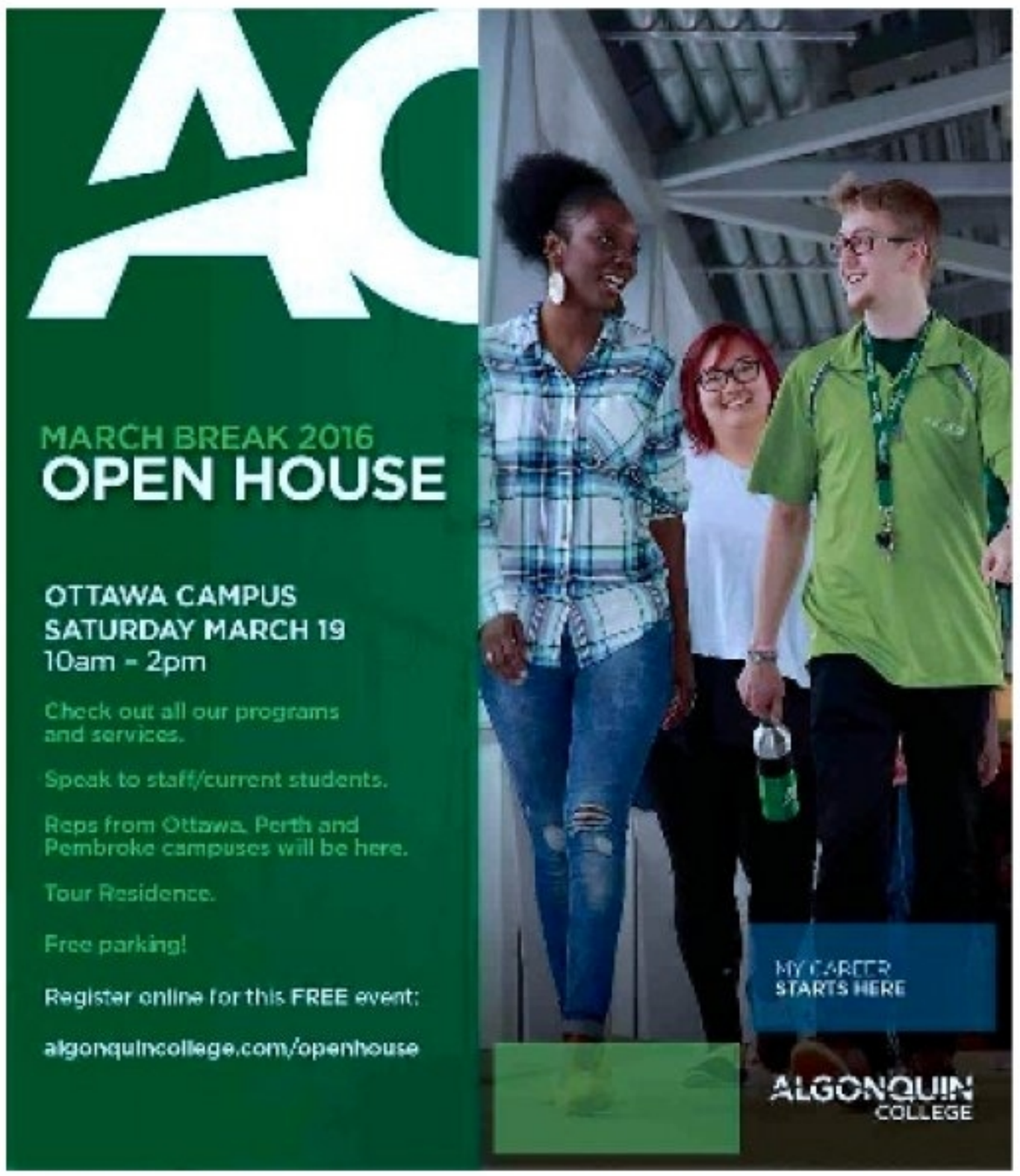
Kichesippi's maibock, Car 696, will be hitting the town April 1. The name references the last street car that was used in Ottawa, which is currently being restored for "Ottawa 2017" festivities.

Ashton Brewing Company will be releasing their Springbock: Look for it at the Old Mill at Ashton as well as Paddy's and Quinn's.

Broken Stick Brewing is working on a new Honey Brown and a Honey Saison for the spring. Stay tuned.

Cartwright Springs Brewery is taking advantage of nature's sweet nectar to make their Maple Porter. No water is used to brew this beer, only maple sap.

JORDAN DUFF/FOR METRO



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metronews.ca/panel

Jeffrey Doucet is CEO of CareerJSM. Its job-search software is being distributed to Ontario institutions . METRO/CONTRIBUTED

Founders aim for the big time

TECHNOLOGY

CareerJSM presents at San Francisco's Launch Festival

A two-person startup enrolled in Ottawa tech incubator L-Spark's current accelerator program has some pretty big shoes to fill.

CareerJSM recently launched its job search management platform at Launch Festival in San Francisco, an event known for being a springboard to success for the likes of FitBit, Dropbox and Mint.

"If we can be five per cent as successful as some of those, we would be really excited," CareerJSM co-founder and CEO Jeffrey Doucet said in a recent interview.

CareerJSM's technology manages job searches for entry-level workers. It provides information about prospective employers, finds potential opportunities and provides interview tips.

Its product is being delivered to 20 post-secondary institutions across Ontario, Doucet said, adding the company has American clients in its pipeline. Schools pay for the product and then deliver it to their students.

He said the software was born out of the frustration he and co-founder Tristan Toye were feeling over the lack of technology and support for entry-level job seekers.

The two McMaster University graduates currently are negotiating their seed round, expected this spring, and one of their potential investors suggested they apply for the Launch Festival.

> **If we can be five per cent as successful as FitBit or Dropbox, we would be really excited.**
> Jeffrey Doucet, CareerJSM

Once at the festival, the pair had four minutes to present their product.

They then answered questions from a panel of five judges.

Some of the 15 startups received a rough ride from the panel, but Doucet said CareerJSM received top marks from one judge, second-place votes from two others and third-place votes from the remaining two.

One of the judges said he thinks the Ontario entrepreneurs will make a lot of money.

"So that was exciting to hear," Doucet said.

TOM PECHLOFF/OTTAWA BUSINESS JOURNAL

COMPUTING

Super laptops coming in two years: Prof

A laptop with 10 terabytes — 10 trillion bytes — of memory could retail for less than $1,000 by 2018, a software veteran said in a recent Technology Innovation Management (TIM) Lecture at Carleton University.

"This will probably be the most disruptive tech that will happen this decade," said Dave Thomas, a Carleton adjunct research professor. "This will allow us to write better programs faster with less code and fewer programmers."

New developments mean new jargon. Where once engineers worked with megabytes and gigabytes of storage, now they talk of terabytes and petabytes.

If an average MP3 song is 3.5MB, you'd need close to 300 million songs to fill one petabyte of storage. In 2013, Netflix announced that their entire database of TV shows and movies used just over 3PB of storage, which could now fit in your pocket thanks to a single memory drive recently developed by Ottawa-based Diablo Technologies.

Last fall, Thomas joined First Derivatives FD Labs as chief scientist, where he says his team routinely works with petabytes of data — billions, even trillions of rows of ones and zeroes.

The advent of faster, cheaper memory has allowed his team to run applications within full datasets instead of slowly moving all the information into an application. "Move the program to the data, not the other way around," said Thomas. "It just seems to make more sense."

In his introduction for the lecture, TIM director Tony Bailetti said Thomas was the reason IBM moved to Ottawa. Thomas, one of the first faculty members appointed to Carleton's School of Computer Science, founded Object Technology International (OTI), a company IBM acquired in 1997.

JOSEPH MATHIEU/OTTAWA BUSINESS JOURNAL

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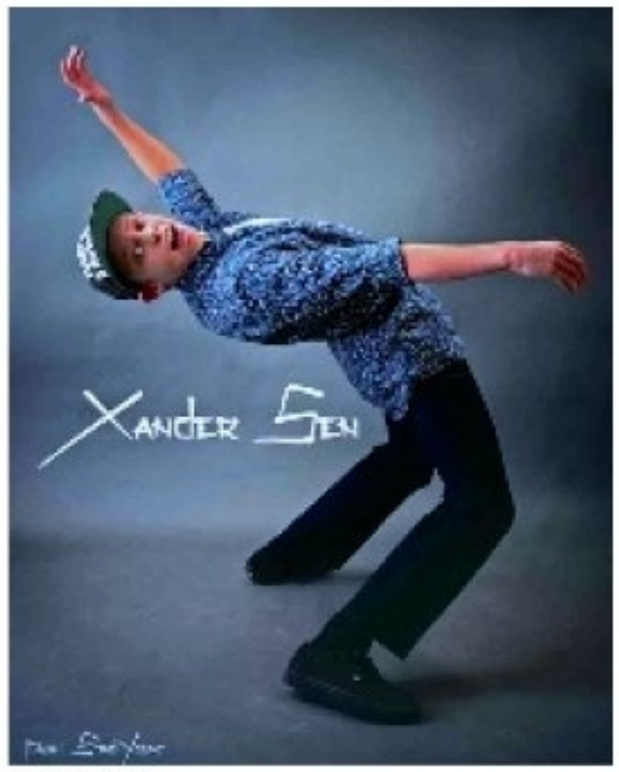

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PHOTOS COURTESY BALFOUR PRODUCTIONS

TALENT SHOW

Audience app to pick winner

Ashley Moffatt
For Metro | Ottawa

It's an artistic talent show with a distinctly digital flair.

Eight handpicked contestants will vie this weekend for a chance to win a scholarship to an art class in their speciality.

The talent show, which is being staged by the Ottawa Little Theatre and Balmour Productions, is meant to showcase a variety of art in Ottawa.

More than 70 people applied, either in person or by video, and the judges chose eight finalists. Those eight contestants will perform on Sunday night, and the judges will narrow the field down to three finalists.

Then it's up to the audience. Using an app or a website, audience members will be asked to pick their favourite performer.

The winner gets an art class scholarship, while the runners up win smaller prizes.

This is the first talent show put on by Balmour Productions, which started as a student initiative in 2011. They've since grown from 15 members to 50 volunteers who sell tickets, work as ushers, act in and direct plays.

The group members focus on many different kinds of art, which is what they want their talent show to reflect.

"People can go and experience different kinds of art," said Sarah Hamdalla, the talent show's co-master of ceremonies.

Tickets can be purchased online at eventbrite.com, or at the door.

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news
Investigates

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau takes part in an interview at Bloomberg headquarters in New York. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Trudeau tricky on Trump truth

NEW YORK

PM deftly skates around offering a real opinion of The Donald

Americans got to witness a Canadian visitor this week immersed in an activity his nation prides itself on having mastered: stickhandling. The person performing the pivots was Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The subject he repeatedly skated around: Donald Trump.

The prime minister was asked repeatedly during his visit to New York this week and in Washington last week what he thinks of the Trump phenomenon. He has answered each time without specifically mentioning the billionaire's name.

"I have tremendous confidence in Americans' capacity to get the right result through their electoral system," he said Thursday, echoing previous responses.

Later, he alluded to the U.S. election before a high-powered crowd. After receiving an award from a women's group at the Waldorf Astoria hotel, he said the reason he was able to introduce progressive policies like a gender-parity cabinet and welcome refugees was because his approach had won with voters.

"As much as I was able to do, and my government was able to do, we only did it because Canadians made a choice: to choose a more open, fair, positive way of doing politics," he told the ballroom crowd, which included the heads of McDonald's, Campbell Soup, Shell, and the Carnival Corp.

He added, dryly: "That is certainly something that I hope resonates through political systems around the world."

That last line prompted laughter and perhaps his loudest applause of the evening — louder even than his references to the gender-parity cabinet, which is why he was invited to the gala and given the award from the women's group Catalyst.

Amid the claps, he added: "I'm not thinking of any place in particular!"

Several former Canadian ambassadors to the U.S. have publicly warned the prime minister not to talk about the U.S. election, saying it would be a mistake to turn Canada into an issue in a messy election.

Trudeau's appearances before heading home later Thursday included an interview at Bloomberg, owned by Trump critic and former New York mayor Michael Bloomberg. Bloomberg wrote a laudatory piece about Trudeau this week headlined, Canada's New Hope.

There, he was asked again about what he would do if Trump becomes president. Trudeau replied that he understood why people were angry in many countries about the current political and economic systems and explained that he's working on democratic reforms and economic policies aimed at empowering frustrated voters.

With respect to a president Trump, he said he'd work on areas where they shared common ground. The interviewer pressed him — what possible common ground could the Canadian progressive find with an American Republican talking about walls and ripping up trade deals and banning Muslim visitors to the U.S.?

Trudeau replied: "A desire to see Americans do well. A desire to see citizens in our countries to have better jobs and greater opportunities."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

FEDERAL BUDGET

Retirement age sticking to 65

Canada will keep its retirement age at 65, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says.

The Stephen Harper Conservative government had planned to raise the retirement age to 67, but Trudeau said that this won't be happening in next week's budget.

"Tweaking the age like that is a very simplistic solution — that won't work — to a complex problem," Trudeau said on Thursday morning in a question and answer interview with Bloomberg News in New York.

Trudeau said he prefers a "nuanced and responsible discussion" about retirement, arguing that investment bankers and lawyers don't put their bodies through the same physical strains as manual labourers. He defended his plans to invest in the middle class and said he's not worried about driving the wealthy out of the country.

"We have nothing against success in Canada," Trudeau said.

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TRADE

Penalty on U.S. dollars nixed

Cuba's government said Thursday it plans to do away with a penalty on converting U.S. dollars, but warned the Obama administration not to expect more changes until the U.S. trade embargo is lifted.

Three days before President Barack Obama visits the island, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez dismissed Obama's lofty rhetoric about using his visit to speak directly to the Cuban people about their future. In a stern and lengthy speech in Havana, he put Obama on notice that any attempt to circumvent the Cuban government by lobbying Cubans directly would not be warmly received.

"Various U.S. officials have declared in recent hours that the objective of Obama's measures is empowering the Cuban people. The Cuban people empowered themselves decades ago," Rodriguez said, referring to the 1959 revolution that put the current Cuban government in power.

Of Obama's talk about engaging directly with Cubans, he added, "It's a nonsense approach."

Still, Rodriguez laid out a scenario under which the 10 per cent penalty on dollars exchanged at banks and moneychangers in Cuba would soon be lifted, making it easier and cheaper for Americans to spend time in Cuba.

Earlier this week the U.S. lifted a ban on Cuban access to the international banking system, a long-standing Cuban demand. Rodriguez told reporters in the Cuban capital that Cuba will attempt a series of international transactions in coming days. If they work, Cuba will eliminate the 10 per cent penalty.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cuban children play baseball in Havana as Cubans look forward to a game between Major League Baseball's Tampa Bay Rays and the Cuban team on March 22. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Cuba, U.S. and Canada in between

The coming week is historic for Cubans and Americans, starting with U.S. President Back Obama's two-day visit to Havana on Monday and Tuesday — the first by a U.S. president since 1928. It ends with a free, open-air concert by the Rolling Stones on Friday.

Cuban President Fidel Castro and Pierre and Margaret Trudeau look over a photo album during the Trudeaus' 1976 state visit to Cuba. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Spotlight on CUBA

Stephen Kimber

In the spring of 2013, U.S. and Cuban negotiators needed a neutral location for secret talks that would lead — 18 months later — to the stunning Dec. 17, 2014, announcement the world's two "closest of enemies" were re-establishing relations. The only thing they could agree on initially, however, was that those talks should take place in friendly-with-both Canada.

Now, ahead of U.S. President Barack Obama's historic visit to Cuba, it's worth asking what the fast-evolving relationship between Washington and Havana — which we helped, in our modest way, to facilitate — will mean for the future of our own historic ties with Cuba.

After Fidel Castro's revolution triumphed in 1959, Canada was one of the few Western nations to maintain diplomatic relations with Cuba. In 1976, then-Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau became the first NATO leader to visit.

For Canada, that visit became a symbolic moment in our quest for an elusive, independent "third-way" foreign policy, untethered to the United States or Great Britain. For Cuba, it was an important symbolic moment too — international recognition of its legitimate place in the world. "Viva Cuba!" Trudeau declared.

The visit had another far-reaching consequence too. Trudeau and Castro became such warm personal friends that, in 2000, the Cuban leader — by then ailing himself — flew to Montreal to serve as an honorary pallbearer at Trudeau's state funeral.

Although relations cooled during the Harper era — the Conservative government opposed Cuba's mere presence at events like the Summit of the Americas — the Cubans did not easily forget Canada had been its friend when others were not. In 2010, during Canada's unsuccessful bid for a seat on the UN Security Council, Cuban diplomats even openly lobbied on our behalf with their Latin American counterparts.

Thanks to the 55-year-old American embargo, which has effectively prevented Americans from trading with — or travelling to — Cuba, and to the 1990s collapse of Cuba's Soviet Bloc benefactors, Canada has had unparalleled access to the Caribbean island nation.

Calgary's Sherritt International — which boasts mining, oil-and-gas and electricity interests there — is now Cuba's largest foreign investor. And the million sun-seeking Canadians who fly south every winter to enjoy the island's spectacular beaches currently represent Cuba's largest source of foreign tourists. Cuba even hosts the largest Terry Fox run for cancer research in the world outside Canada.

With American businesses and individuals eager — and increasingly able — to share Cuba's long-forbidden fruit, Canada's role in Cuba will inevitably diminish. But it's worth reminding ourselves of that sweet 2010 moment at the United Nations when Cuba unexpectedly stood up for us. "You can trust Canada," said Cuba's Ambassador Pedro Nunez Mosquera.

Cubans do have long memories, and they won't forget who their friends have been.

Stephen Kimber is the author of nine books, including What Lies Across the Water: The Real Story of the Cuban Five, and a columnist at Metro Halifax

You can trust Canada.
Cuban Ambassador
Pedro Nunez Mosquera, in 2010

Pet clothing sales frozen

RETAIL

Companies forced to lay off employees and cut prices

An unseasonably warm winter in Eastern Canada and a weak economy have taken a big bite out of sales from businesses that cater to furry best friends, the pet products industry says.

"For us, it's a big hurt," said Marianne Bertrand, owner of Muttluks. The Toronto-based company estimates that sales of doggie coats and boots have slipped by more than 30 per cent this winter.

Muttluks, whose boots were recently given to U.S. President Barack Obama's dogs by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during his state visit, was forced to lay off about a dozen employees when it prematurely shut production late last year.

Montreal pet store Doghaus said the warm winter prompted it to slash its prices in half and it plans to offer even deeper discounts to help clear inventory. "It wasn't a wasteland or anything, but it definitely was lighter than other years," said manager Sarah Miller-Barrington.

Sarah and her dog Fergus in the Doghaus pet supply store in Montreal. An unseasonably warm winter in Eastern Canada and a weak economy have taken a big bite out of sales from businesses that cater to furry best friends, the pet products industry says. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Industry surveys have suggested that most pet owners are willing to spend extra for the best products available, including food, even if they are more expensive.

Like many of her customers, Miller-Barrington says she tends to "mother" her eight-year-old Shetland Sheepdog named Fergus, even though his heavy fur coat protects him from the elements.

Just as parents outfit their children for the cold, many people feel the same obligation to their pets, she added. Others simply view it as an opportunity to make a fashion statement by finding a fun new dog coat each year.

K9 Excel owner Johanne Beaulieu said she hasn't seen this level of sales decline in the six years she's operated the Montreal store and website, which sells clothes, boots, and dog diapers.

A weaker economy, especially in Western Canada, has also contributed to diminished sales of pet products, says Louis McCann, CEO of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council of Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

$7 billion

What the pet business is worth annually, including food, clothing, accessories and trips to the vet, according to the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council of Canada.

SHARING ECONOMY

Airbnb feels heat

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

One of B.C.'s hottest tourism destinations plans to crack down on unlicensed nightly home rentals on websites such as Airbnb in a bid to improve affordability and housing availability for long-term residents.

District of Tofino councillors voted this week to immediately educate people about and enforce regulations surrounding bed and breakfasts and short-term rentals, which have flourished since Airbnb entered the scene two to three years ago.

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DECODED Biological recycling

MICROSCOPIC MEALTIME

Did you crack a bottled soft drink today? Chances are it was made of PET, a super-durable plastic made from crude oil. Unlike organic waste, PET doesn't get broken down by bacteria (biodegraded) in the environment — at least, we didn't think so. Scientists have discovered a bacteria species that eats PET for lunch, and, with it, a potential way to **tackle one of the most perplexing pollution problems of our time.**

PET: PUBLIC ENEMY Poly(ethylene terephthalate), or PET, is incredibly stable. It breaks down into tiny, confetti-like pieces, but its chemical properties remain the same; It's still plastic. Birds eat it, fish eat it, and it collects in vast islands in the ocean. Only a fraction of the 53 million tonnes made per year gets recycled.

1 Bacteria makes enzymes (proteins that break things down).

Enzyme #1 PETase, which breaks down PET

2 PETase breaks down PET into a smaller molecule called MHET

MHET MHET MHET MHET

Enzyme #2 MHETase, which breaks down MHET

3 MHETase breaks down MHET into two environmentally friendlier chemicals, TPA and EG.

4 Bacteria further breaks down EG and TPA into food for its carbon and energy needs. Yum!

TPA (terephthalic acid)

EG (ethylene glycol)

BRILLIANT IDEONELLA Scientists from Keio University in Tokyo slogged through the sludge at a PET recycling yard and found a strain of bacteria previously unknown to science: **Ideonella sakaiensis 201-F6.** It evolved to use plastic as a source of food. It can break down a thin, 60 mg film of PET in six weeks at 30 C, turning it into two chemicals that are relatively environmentally benign. The process is still too slow to apply on an industrial scale, but this is a start.

GRAPHICS BY ANDRÉS PLANA/METRO

CITIZEN SCIENTIST by Genna Buck

Do chimpanzees believe in God?

QUESTION
Whoa. Chimps build shrines? Does this mean humans aren't the only species with religion? — Colin, Toronto

You know, Colin, it wouldn't surprise me. Chimpanzees have been observed using tools, warring among rival groups and dancing in the rain. They're known to practise a sort of communal chilling-out after meals that's been compared to gathering for worship.

However, I don't think there's conclusive evidence of chimp spirituality in the recent Nature paper you're talking about. It describes chimps caught on camera repeatedly and deliberately hurling rocks at trees and leaving distinctive stone piles (shrines?) around the forest. It didn't seem to be a mating ritual. It wasn't about food. There was no obvious evolutionary reason for it at all. The authors suggested it *could* be symbolic, or even sacred.

But very careful further study is needed, I think, because researchers have to fight the tendency we all have to *anthropomorphize*, or ascribe human characteristics to non-humans. It's one of our powerful cognitive biases (in-born patterns of flawed reasoning).

That said, this study made me think of a conference I went to where psychiatrist Martin Brüne presented findings about a possible PTSD-like syndrome in chimpanzees.

Brüne showed a video of a retired research chimp curled into a ball, rocking back and forth and hitting himself, much like I'd once seen a child with autism do, mid-tantrum. It looked eerily human.

The moderator said chimps continually exceeded his expectations: He always found they were more smart, more complex and more self-aware than he'd thought.

So I'd be open to the idea that our closest living relatives are into human-like things, such as prayer.

But we need to see more evidence first.

FINDINGS
Your week in science

Dengue vaccine
Doctors at Johns Hopkins University have announced a 100-per-cent successful clinical trial of a vaccine for dengue, one of the most common — and most feared— mosquito-borne diseases on Earth. (It's not called "bone-break fever" for no reason).

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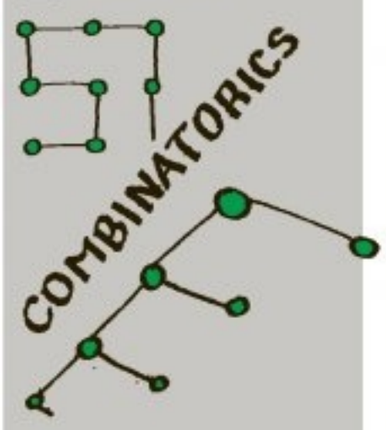

DEFINITION
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Your essential daily news
MOVIES MUSIC TELEVISION DIGITAL

Where are all the movie stars?

ANALYSIS

Marketing trumps man in today's big studio films

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

The Divergent Series is proof you don't need big names if you've got a big brand. CONTRIBUTED

Where have all the movie stars gone?

Once upon a time big names on even bigger marquees were as close to a guarantee of good box office as one gets in the movie biz. But no more.

This weekend The Divergent Series: Allegiant, the third part of the young adult series, hit theatres. Based on the successful books, it stars Shailene Woodley and Theo James in a teen epic about dystopia, guilt and artfully tossed pixie haircuts.

In the new film the pair risk it all to go beyond the walls of their shattered city to discover the truth about their troubled world.

Woodley and James are appealing performers and despite having chiselled cheekbones and earning accolades (they won the Teen Choice Award for best liplock in Insurgent and Woodley was a Golden Globe nominee for The Descendants), no one is going to see Allegiant because they're in it.

Why? Because they're not movie stars — they're brand ambassadors.

The movie's brand is bigger than they are and that's the draw.

Young adult movies like Twilight made Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart famous and superhero films reignited Robert Downey Jr.'s career and turned Chris Hemsworth into a sex symbol, but none of these actors have scored recent hits outside of their best-known brands.

These days the marketing is more important than the movie star.

It's almost a throwback to the very early days of cinema when actors weren't given billing or publicized for the films they made.

Fearing performers would demand larger paycheques if they became popular, the studios gave them nicknames instead.

Hamilton, Ont.-born Florence Lawrence was known as the Biograph Girl, named after the studio that produced her films, but with the release of The Broken Oath in 1910 became the first entertainer to have her name appear in the credits of a film.

Floodgates opened, soon names like Mary Pickford (another Biograph Girl), Douglas Fairbanks and Charlie Chaplin festooned not only movie credits but posters as well, usually above the title.

The studios seized the marketing value of their actors and for years the star system was a money-spinner.

These stars were so powerful they not only sold tickets by the fistful but also influenced contemporary trends.

For instance, it's rumoured that sales of men's undershirts plummeted in 1934 when The King of Hollywood, Clark Gable, was seen without one in It Happened One Night.

As the legend goes, sales took such a hit several underwear manufacturers tried, unsuccessfully, to sue Columbia Pictures for damages.

For decades stars ruled supreme at the box office, but the business has changed. I'm guessing the movie studios love it because no film brand ever asked for more money or a bigger trailer.

Certainly Tom Cruise can still sell a ticket or three, but only if his movie has the words Mission Impossible in the title and Matt Damon was brought back in to add star sparkle to the new Jason Bourne movie after a lackluster reboot with Jeremy Renner. Jennifer Lawrence is a movie star. Her latest film Joy, the empowering story of a woman and her mop, wasn't a big hit but without her star power would likely never have been made at all.

But former sure bets like Will Smith, Johnny Depp and Angelina Jolie cannot always be counted on for big returns.

It's not just the movie business's attitude toward fame that has changed, it's also ours.

Today a proliferation of YouTube superstars and social media has democratized fame and in a world and business where everyone is famous, no one truly is, not even the stars of a blockbuster such as The Divergent Series: Allegiant.

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

The Divergent Series: Allegiant Part 1	★★
The Program	★★
Chi-Raq	★★★★
Knight of Cups	★

HOW RATING WORKS
★★★★ SEE IT
★★★ WORTHWHILE
★★ UP TO YOU
★ SKIP IT

DIVERGENT Q&A

Zoe Kravitz on being a self-professed nerd and indie film roles

Zoe Kravitz is gearing up for one more Divergent film after this latest instalment, Allegiant, hits theatres. But she might be able to squeeze in another hip indie — like last year's Dope — before heading back to finish off the YA dystopian series.

You are three movies into a four-movie series. How do you approach this section?
Yeah, it's interesting, it's kind of like going home again. I feel like I know this character so well now that, I know how she reacts to things, I know how I want her to evolve. But then you read the script and you go, "OK, this is a moment. How do I make that part of her come through?" I feel like that's where the work comes in.

What were some of those moments for this one?
I actually really enjoyed how quiet she is in this film. I think there was a lot of angst in her in the first film, but there was an immaturity there. Now so much has gone on, there's been real loss, real death, real killing, real revolution, so I think it's kind of shut her up in a really interesting way, where she's focused.

Do you know what happens going forward?
Yeah, I read the books, but I try not to dwell on it because once we've gotten the script that has got to be your focus, because you can't dwell on the things that aren't in there, you know what I mean? You're kind of like "OK, this is now what we're working with."

You go between these massive franchises and very interesting smaller films. How do you navigate that?
It's about if the story reflects something that I feel like I haven't seen or want to see more of or want to be a part of. It doesn't really come down to, "OK, I'm gonna do a really cool indie film, and I'm gonna do a big franchise film," you know? Mad Max, I loved the story. Divergent, I loved the story. Dope, I loved the story.

You've described yourself as a nerd. Why?
I'm a very nerdy person. Acting for me came from musical theatre, which some people might not think is nerdy. But it was not the coolest group of kids at school, it just never is. In all of the schools that I ever went to, that was my crew. I was in every play that I could get near and always singing in three-part harmony with my friends. I have that very campy part of myself. I was not the coolest kid in school, so I consider myself a nerd.

But nerds have really come into their own.
Yeah, I think people are beginning to not only accept but be intrigued by the less obvious things in life. It's not that we're less nerdy, we just don't care as much. Or people are not so quick to judge, hopefully. Nerds are more interesting, right?

NED EHRBAR/METRO

Spike Lee's take on gang violence

Lysistrata (Teyonah Parris) is the woman who leads the move to withhold sex from men in Chicago's South Side until the gun violence stops in Spike Lee's new joint Chi-Raq. CONTRIBUTED

INTERVIEW

Chi-Raq inspired by ancient Greek play

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

"The human spirit is a great thing," says director Spike Lee on what he learned while doing research for his new film. The director spent six months in South Side Chicago, "talking to people, meeting people, getting the lay of the land," before shooting a single frame of his anti-gang-violence movie Chi-Raq. "It was very important, not just meeting people, but people becoming comfortable with me. People opening up to me."

The movie draws its story about a neighbourhood woman who convinces the wives and girlfriends of gang members to withhold sex from their men until the guys agree to put down their weapons from a Greek play first performed in 411 BC, but details the very modern problem of gun violence.

"At the end of the movie in that scene where everybody is dressed in white," says Lee, "those women are not actresses. Those women are members of a group called Pain Over Purpose. They are mothers whose children, whose sons and daughters, have been shot down in the streets of Chicago. Those pictures they are holding up are pictures of their loved ones.

"The pain of a parent who has lost a child in any circumstance is something that no parent should have to go through. They all say that there is a hole in their spirit, in their soul, that will never be replaced. Many of those mothers have tried to commit suicide and had various other problems since then but they are holding strong."

The cycle of violence portrayed in the film and acted out for real on the streets — during Chi-Raq's 38-day filming schedule 331 people were wounded and shot, 65 people were murdered in Chicago — was personal for one of the movie's stars.

"Do you know Jennifer Hudson's history?" asks Lee. "It is known knowledge that Jennifer's mother, brother and nephew were murdered in Chicago. I think that's extra gravitas that you have with Jennifer Hudson in this film. This is not an act for her. She got hit directly by gun violence on the South Side of Chicago.

"I didn't want her to think that I was exploiting her. I knew I wanted her for the part but there was some length of time before I got the courage to approach her. Also, when we did meet I was babbling. She said, 'Spike, I know why you want me to do this film, so just stop. I'll do it.' I was trying to be sensitive and I turned out to just beat around the bush. I said, 'I'll just shut up and say thank you.'"

Lee is fearless in his handling of the material, taking chances narratively — the entire film is presented in verse — and visually, to tell the timely and hot-button story of a "self-inflicted genocide."

Finding the mix of heartfelt storytelling and satire, says Lee, was crucial to the success of the film.

"It is not an easy thing to do," he says.

THE TV DINNER JESSICA ALLEN

What the two actors express in brief glances is extraordinary, especially considering that De Sica cast non-professionals

The first time I ever had mozzarella in carrozza — a cheese and anchovy delight sandwiched between golden-crusted slices of fried bread — was at work. Over 10 years, I was a dish washer, coffee maker, server and eventually a floor manager at the original Terroni in Toronto — original because the southern Italian restaurant is now a mini-empire that includes not only a bakery and wine-importing arm but also two outposts in Los Angeles.

And the first time I ever saw mozzarella in carrozza outside of work was on screen in Neorealist Italian director Vittoria De Sica's Bicycle Thieves, one of the first films Simon and I ever watched together. The 1948 post-World War II film, which comes out on a new Criterion Blu-Ray special edition on March 29, is about a working class man, Antonio Ricci, who gets a job hanging posters on the caveat that he owns a bicycle. Ricci's wife pawns their bed linen in order to get Antonio's bike out of hock. Just as life looks sunnier for the young family, the bike is stolen. The rest of the film chronicles Antonio and his young son Bruno's quest for it in the gritty streets of Rome.

There's a single respite: seeing that Bruno is exhausted and disillusioned, Antonio offers to take him for a pizza with what little money he has left. As soon as they enter a restaurant, they (and the audience) know that everyone else is better-appointed then they are. It's not the type of place that serves pizza. So they order mozzarella in carrozza and a carafe of wine. Sweet Bruno, who barely knows how to use a knife and fork, eats his sandwich and drinks his wine with gusto. For a heart-breaking moment, they've not a trouble in the world.

What the two actors, Lamberto Maggiorani and Enzo Staiola, express in brief glances — from desperation to exultation — is extraordinary, especially considering that De Sica cast non-professionals. (Maggiorani was a factory worker and Staiola was a neighbourhood boy who De Sica spotted from his car.)

Bicycle Thieves is, of course, political: it examines the social problems of postwar Italian reconstruction. But it's themes — including how our lives can feel both predetermined and full of chance — are universal. In 1999 Roger Ebert gave the film four stars on account of this: "it is a simple, powerful film about a man who needs a job," he wrote. "[It] had such an impact on its first release that when the British film magazine Sight & Sound held its first international poll of film makers and critics in 1952, it was voted the greatest film of all time."

After we recently re-watched it, we agreed the film was more impactful the second time around, particularly the ending when out of desperation Antonio steals a bike and is mobbed by an angry crowd while Bruno, in tears, watches on. The last shot, a tip of the hat to fellow director Charlie Chaplin, shows Antonio and Bruno dissolving into a crowd. "It's a perfect film," Simon said as we wiped our eyes. There weren't any other words. By chance, we recently walked into Terroni, the place where I passed from my twenties into my thirties and became something approximating an adult, and where, by chance, I first met Simon. And, by chance, there on the special's menu, was mozzarella in carrozza. Our eyes lit up.

Jessica Allen is the digital correspondent on CTV's The Social.

FILM BRIEF

China-Tinseltown venture unveils a dozen new movies

A joint Hollywood and Chinese production house announced this week a slew of upcoming films, as moviemakers increasingly look to tap into China's vast market.

The announcement in Hong Kong was made by Flagship Entertainment, a tie-up between Warner Brothers, China Media Capital and Hong Kong television broadcaster TVB and comes with Hollywood awash with constantly growing Chinese funding.

Flagship unveiled 12 new films. They include Meg, about the discovery of a gigantic ancestor of the great white shark, Beautiful Coma, a romance co-produced by Hong Kong director Peter Chan and U.S. director Brett Ratner, who directed the Rush Hour franchise, and a remake of Miss Congeniality. AFP

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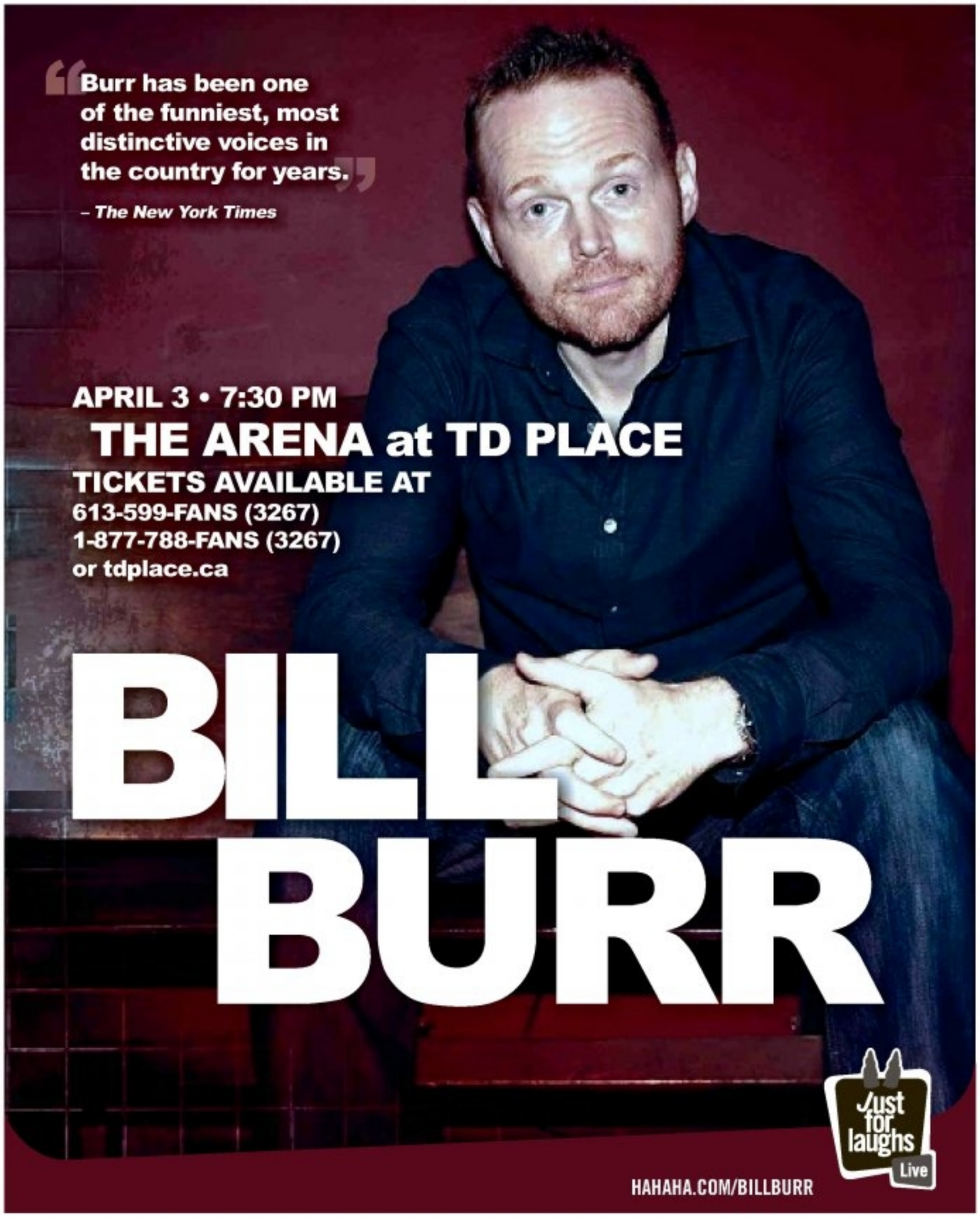

Actor defends Lance Armstrong

FALLEN SPORTS HERO

Ben Foster had to learn about doping culture for role in film

After enduring an intense exercise regime, secretly using performance-enhancing drugs, and immersing himself in the world of Lance Armstrong to portray the cyclist on the big screen, Ben Foster was left with one feeling for the controversial athlete.

"Empathy," said the actor. "It was a complicated time. He's a complicated man."

It's a feeling Foster hopes audiences can also come away with after watching The Program, which tracks Armstrong's incredible cycling career and the behind-the-scenes doping that drove it.

OPENING IN CANADIAN CITIES
The Program opens in Toronto, Calgary, Ottawa, Vancouver and Montreal on Friday.

Armstrong, a cancer survivor and longtime athlete, was once an American sporting hero, but is now a divisive figure.

He has been banned from cycling for life and had his seven Tour de France titles stripped after telling Oprah Winfrey in a 2013 interview that he used performance-enhancing drugs.

Foster knew the bare-bones of Armstrong's story before making The Program, which was directed by British filmmaker Stephen Frears. But playing the athlete made him appreciate the broader culture of doping that existed in cycling at the time.

"He did doping better. He did nutrition better. He did the cycling gear better. He did training better. It's not about being a liar. If everybody's doping, everybody's lying," Foster said, noting that Armstrong also raised millions for cancer research over the course of his career.

"He treated people in a particular way that I don't necessarily agree with but the complexity of the good that he did, with the way that he did it, deserves a deeper consideration."

To properly capture Armstrong's intensity, Foster — unbeknownst to the rest of his cast, but under the supervision of a doctor — took performance-enhancing drugs himself and only revealed what he had done after filming had wrapped.

He also tried to reach out to Armstrong, but the athlete wasn't interested in talking.

Foster nonetheless describes himself as a fan of Armstrong's, saying he found himself defending the cyclist on the set of the film.

"We don't like that Lance didn't apologize in a way that felt sincere. And that's why we're punishing him still," he said. "I don't condone or condemn ... I think it's a complicated story." THE CANADIAN PRESS

ANOTHER TAKE

Lance fascinating person to watch, says O'Dowd

Chris O'Dowd, who plays David Walsh, an Irish journalist who worked to bring Armstrong's doping into the spotlight, agreed that the cyclist is a complex character and noted that the film attempts to provide a better picture of the intricacies of his world.

"He was an incredible athlete, very manipulative, vindictive, self-centred, very smart, and ego driven," he said. "I think he's a fascinating person to watch."

O'Dowd's personal feelings about Armstrong, however, tend to waver.

"At times I feel slightly sorry for him. But then I think of how he treated some people ... and I think, 'I don't know if he needs our sympathy,'" he said. "I think he's a fallen hero, but still a kind of hero."

Ben Foster stars as Lance Armstrong in The Program directed by Stephen Frears. CONTRIBUTED

[Lance Armstrong] treated people in a particular way that I don't necessarily agree with but the complexity of the good that he did, with the way that he did it, deserves a deeper consideration.
Ben Foster on the controversial sports hero

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Scans show '90 per cent chance' of hidden chambers in Tutankhamun tomb

How the stars brought golf to Palm Springs

With more than a 110 courses and a 1950s ring-a-ding vibe, Palm Springs is one of the best places to gulf in North America. COURTESY OF VISITGREATERPALMSPRINGS.COM

CALIFORNIA

Desert oasis a top place to tee-off

Brian Kendall
For Metro Canada

Golf and Palm Springs go together like Bob Hope and Bing Crosby.

Hope, Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and other celebrity golfers helped popularize the game in a desert oasis famous as Hollywood's Haven.

Just 193 kilometres east of downtown Los Angeles, Palm Springs provided a welcome escape from the city's smog and congestion. The stars came to bask in the abundant sunshine and delight in the starkly dramatic scenery of the Coachella Valley.

With more than 110 courses, golf remains a major draw throughout a popular sunbird destination that works hard to retain its ring-a-ding 1950s vibe. Between tee-offs, budget time for a tour of the sleekly elegant midcentury modern hotels and civic buildings, shopping on posh North Palm Canyon Drive, and a happy hour cocktail at Melvyn's, one of Sinatra's old haunts.

Golf came to the Coachella Valley in 1925 with the opening of O'Donnell Golf Club, a private course frequented by Clark Gable and other matinee idols.

Today, courses by acclaimed golf architects are scattered throughout Greater Palm Springs, an area encompassing old Palm Springs and eight seamlessly connected sister communities, most notably La Quinta, Palm Desert and Indian Wells.

Former host of the Bob Hope Classic, SilverRock Resort's Arnold Palmer Classic Course in La Quinta is spectacularly routed along the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains. La Quinta is also home to PGA West, one of North America's premier golf properties. Most famous of the resort's six layouts is the Stadium Course, a Pete Dye-designed monster rated one of the game's best — and toughest — courses.

A highlight in Palm Desert is Shadow Ridge Golf Club, an expertly sculpted Australia Sandbelt-inspired course by Nick Faldo. Equally strong are the two Hurdzan-Fry designs at Desert Willow Golf Resort.

CELEB POWER
Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and others helped popularize gulf in Palm Springs.

And the must-play in Indian Wells is the Players Course at Indian Wells Golf Resort. This unyielding John Fought design stretches nearly 7,400 yards from the tips.

Other top courses include Eagle Falls Golf Course, Escena Golf Club, the Pete Dye and Gary Player layouts at Westin Mission Hills Golf Resort and Spa, and Shadow Mountain Golf Club, one of the few courses designed by the legendary Gene Sarazen.

With street names like Jack Benny Road, Gene Autry Trail and Ginger Rogers Road, even the drive to your next tee time or sightseeing excursion becomes more adventure than chore in this celebrity obsessed burg.

Sunnylands, at the intersection of Frank Sinatra and Bob Hope Drives in Rancho Mirage, is another notable haunt of Hollywood luminaries past and present.

Built in the 1960s for publisher, diplomat and philanthropist Walter Annenberg, the pink-roofed Desert Modernism-style mansion (complete with a nine-hole golf course) is now open to the public.

Presidents from Eisenhower to Obama have visited. When greeting Queen Elizabeth in 1983, Annenberg announced she would "see how ordinary Americans live."

Welcome to Palm Springs.

Visit Brian's website at canadiangolftraveller.com

ERIN BRUBACHER

ERIN BRUBACHER

Award-winning play coming to NAC this spring

An award-winning play written by one of the country's fastest rising stars is coming to the National Arts Centre.

Winner of the 2015 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Play, Concord Floral is a loose and imaginative adaptation of Giovanni Boccaccio's 14th-century allegory, The Decameron, where a group of teenagers seek refuge in an abandoned villa in Florence and weather the plague by telling stories to keep each other alive.

"In this piece, Concord Floral involves a plague of their own making," explains the play's co-director, Erin Brubacher. "It's also set in a contemporary, Canadian suburb — in this case, Hunt Club in Ottawa."

The play is written by Jordan Tannahill, a Governor General's Award recipient and one of Canada's most promising young, independent theatre artists. Tannahill is now based in Toronto but grew up in the suburbs of Ottawa.

Concord Floral came together through a three-year development process that involved Brubacher, co-director Cara Spooner and a group of teenagers from the Greater Toronto Area.

"It's been quite a journey," says Brubacher. "We've all sort of grown up with this piece and it's really exciting now, going in with a new cast from Ottawa. It's a nice passing of the torch from our Toronto gang."

The cast for the performance at the NAC is made up of ten young actors from different neighbourhoods and schools across the city of Ottawa.

Brubacher hopes the audience here will take away many things from this play but, most of all, she hopes Concord Floral leaves the audience with a healthy respect for youth.

"I think that, sometimes, youth aren't treated very well in our public spaces and there's a sense that they don't have anything to teach us and they do, of course," she says, adding that we rarely see young people in a performance context.

"We often see 25-year-olds playing 16-year-olds, which can give us a distorted picture of that time in life."

CONCORD FLORAL

Where: National Arts Centre, NAC Studio
When: March 29 through April 9
Matinees: April 2 and April 9, 2016 at 2 p.m.
Tickets: $46

For tickets and more info, visit nac-cna.ca.

metro SPORTS

FIFA says it paid Sepp Blatter $3.76 million in 2015, and also reported a loss of $122 million for a year blighted by scandal.

IN BRIEF

Gee-Gees fall to Huskies
Dalyce Emmerson had 25 points to lead the second-ranked Saskatchewan Huskies past No. 7 Ottawa Gee-Gees 73-62 on Thursday at the Canadian university women's basketball tournament.

Kellie Ring led Ottawa with 19 points and eight rebounds.

In other action, the Saint Mary's Huskies edged the Alberta Pandas 53-52. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jays split Grapefruit pair
Carlos Correa and Preston Tucker homered Thursday in the Houston Astros' 7-5 split-squad win over a Toronto Blue Jays split squad. Toronto starter Brad Penny gave up five runs on four hits and three walks in two innings.

Scott Diamond tossed two perfect innings as the second half of the Jays split squad blanked the Canadian junior national team 12-0 on Thursday.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tough draw for U-20s
Canada has been given a stiff test in Group B with Nigeria, Japan and Spain for the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup in Papua New Guinea in November.

Nigeria, the seeded team in the pool, was runner-up to Germany in 2014 and fourth in 2012.

The Canadian women made the U-20 World Cup quarter-finals as host in 2014, losing to Germany.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

American-born commissioner Gary Bettman presents 2015 Stanley Cup to Canadian Jonathan Toews. BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

All-American worry

STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS

Bettman hopes Canadian fans keep watching post-season

With the rare prospect of an all-American NHL post-season looming large, Gary Bettman hopes Canadians still tune in to watch the battle for the Stanley Cup.

The NHL commissioner acknowledged in an interview there is a sense of uncertainty regarding TV ratings in Canada, with no Canadian teams likely to qualify for the playoffs for the first time since 1970.

Still, he was hopeful that fans north of the border would tune in regardless.

Bettman said local teams "tend to draw better" in terms of ratings.

"But as long as the hockey is entertaining and exciting and competitive we're hoping and expecting that fans will tune in and watch great hockey," he added.

The four lowest-placed teams in the NHL are Canadian, as are six of the bottom 10. The Toronto Maple Leafs and Edmonton Oilers currently have the fewest points in the league, just behind the Calgary Flames and Winnipeg Jets.

Last season five clubs from Canada — Calgary, Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg and Vancouver — qualified for the post-season. One year earlier it was only one — Montreal, also the last Canadian team to capture the Stanley Cup in 1993.

"Fifty per cent of the players ... are from Canada."
Gary Bettman

Bettman said the wealth of Canadian talent should be enough to attract interest, as should the appeal of exciting, competitive hockey.

From Jonathan Toews to Drew Doughty to Jamie Benn to Patrice Bergeron and Steven Stamkos, Canadian players will indeed be well represented come playoff time.

"Fifty per cent of the players in this game are from Canada so for people to suggest that there isn't still a Canadian-centric focus I think is a little misleading," Bettman said.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

EUROPA LEAGUE

Liverpool gives boot to ManU

A stunning solo goal by Philippe Coutinho helped Liverpool eliminate great rival Manchester United from the Europa League, while titleholder Sevilla and tournament favourite Borussia Dortmund also reached the quarterfinals with ease on Thursday.

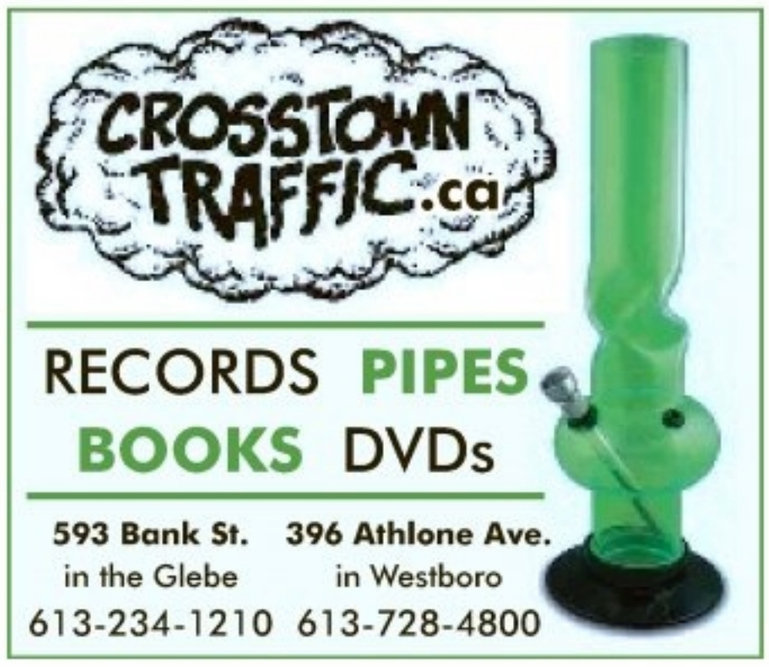
Liverpool drew 1-1 with United at Old Trafford to seal a 3-1 aggregate victory, with Coutinho scoring the equalizer — and all-important away goal — on the stroke of halftime by dribbling into the box and applying an extravagant chip for his finish.

Sevilla, seeking a third straight Europa League title, beat Basel 3-0 to advance by the same score on aggregate, and the prolific Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored Dortmund's goals in a 2-1 win at Tottenham for 5-1 overall.

Sparta Prague eliminated Lazio by winning 3-0 away in the round's big upset. Athletic Bilbao knocked out Valencia on away goals in an all-Spanish match, and other teams to go through were Villarreal, Shakhtar Donetsk and Braga.

The draw for the quarterfinals takes place on Friday.

Man United's only possible route to next season's Champions League now rests solely through a top-four finish in the Premier League, which is currently looking unlikely with the team in sixth place with nine games left.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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8	7	9	6	4	2	3	5	1
1	5	3	8	2	9	7	4	6
4	9	7	5	3	6	8	1	2
6	2	8	4	7	1	5	3	9
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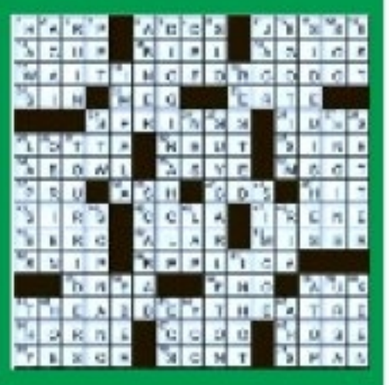

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RECIPE Veggie Sloppy Joes

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

You won't miss the meat but will love the flavour upgrade of this classic comfort meal. Don't forget the napkins.

Ready in
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 30 minutes
Makes: 4 Sloppy Joes

Ingredients
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 chopped onion
- 1 chopped red pepper
- 2 (14 oz) cans of black beans, rinsed
- 1 (14 oz) can of chick peas, rinsed
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp maple syrup
- 1/4 tsp cumin
- 1/4 tsp chili powder
- 1/4 tsp paprika
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup shaved cheddar

Directions

1. In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onions and peppers. Saute until the vegetables are softened.

2. Add the beans, tomato sauce, vinegar, maple syrup, cumin, chili powder, paprika and salt. Simmer for 15 minutes.

3. Serve on toasted whole grain bun and sprinkle with cheddar cheese.

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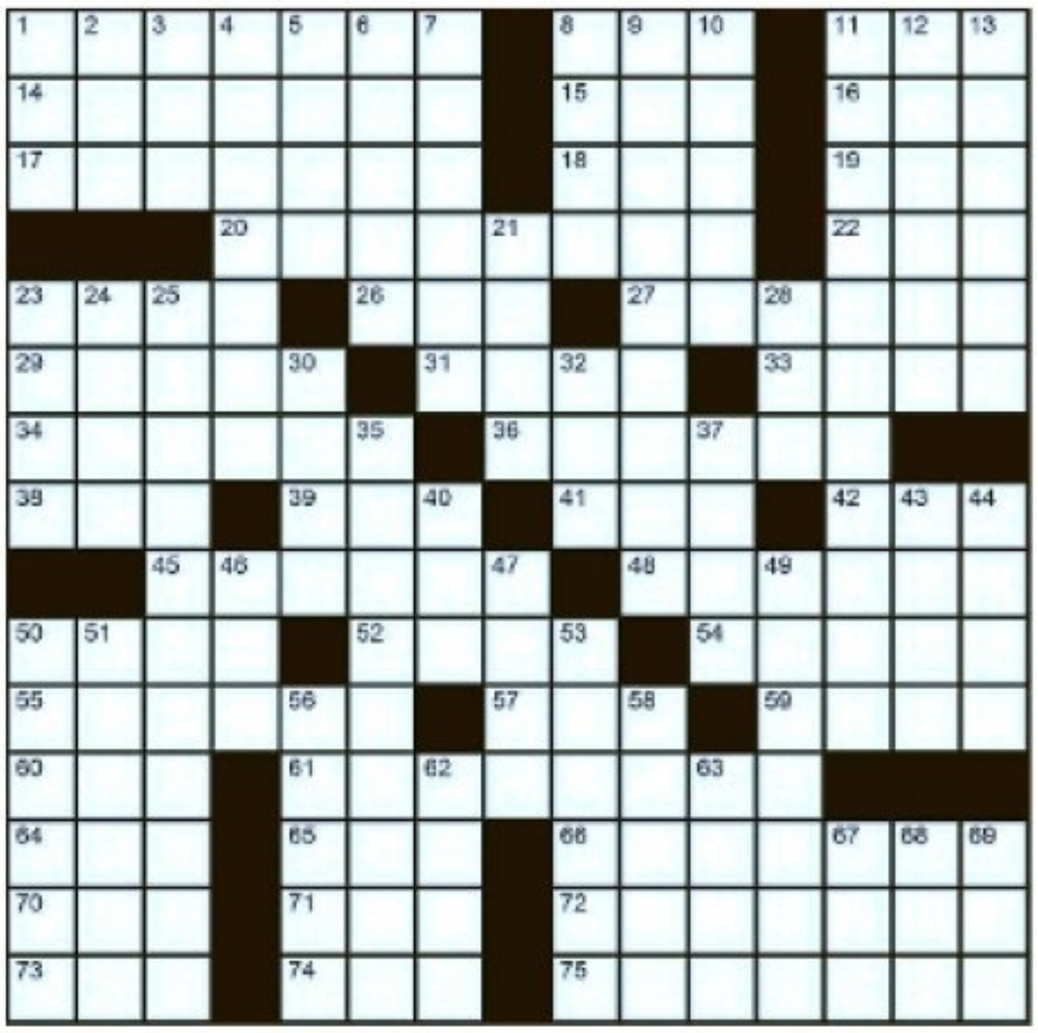
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Unwavering
8. Butterfly logo co.
11. Dripping on the tree bark
14. Tributes
15. Stock mkt. debut
16. _-la-la
17. Fashionable
18. Women's _ (1970s movement)
19. Bard's evening
20. Direct opposite as per North, to South
22. "Jeff _." (Mid-2000s Canadian comedy series)
23. Wee word
26. _ Lanka
27. Canadian actress Ms. Cuthbert
29. McIntosh middles
31. Pressure unit
33. Some parrots
34. New cop
36. "Easy there...": 2 wds.
38. Tolkien creature
39. Alkali
41. Business bigwig, briefly
42. Howdies
45. British actress, _ Bonham Carter
48. Weightlifter's pride
50. Howard of "Dallas"
52. Fair
54. Aired again
55. Improve
57. Li'l old MTV show
59. Mr. Beatty's
60. Do this at the auction
61. Canadian canned soup brand
64. Give it _ _ (Try)
65. "...and now, without further _..."
66. "_ Flame" by The Bangles
70. Snazzy auto
71. Hollywood's Mr. Howard
72. "The Beachcombers" star Bruno
73. _ Francisco
74. Lettered airline, once
75. British Invasion band

DOWN
1. Initials-sharers of Suzanne Somers' Canuck hubby
2. On the _ (Precisely)
3. Ms. Schumer
4. Victor _, Investigative Reporter on CTV's "W5"
5. Opposin'
6. Aeries
7. Casual top with jeans
8. Simon's co-member in Prozzak
9. Bug-built bugs capturer: 2 wds.
10. The _ Peace Prize
11. Howie Mandel played Dr. Wayne Fiscus on what 1982 to 1988 medical drama?: 2 wds.
12. "Think" singer Ms. Franklin
13. 'Giant' attractions at the Toronto Zoo
21. Subatomic particle
23. Land unit
24. Benefit
25. Sam Roberts song that goes "Been looking for peace but they're bringing you war.": 2 wds.
28. 1965 hit song, when doubled
30. Part of a window
32. Mythical bird
35. Makeup kit item
37. Pinot _ (Wine variety)
40. Antacid brand
43. Apple tablet
44. Taxpayers' IDs in The States
46. Mr. Wallach
47. Sparkling wine city of Italy
49. Big name in multivitamins
50. BBQ sizzlers, Shish _ [var. sp.]
51. 2001 Kate Winslet WWII-set movie
53. Canadian songstress Lindi
56. _-topper (Hit song)
58. Approach nighttime
62. _ fide
63. Italian saint, Philip _
67. Edward Snowden headlines org.
68. Communication syst.
69. '_' _ for Lethbridge

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
The Sun moves into your birth sign at the weekend, so don't worry if you are feeling a bit under the weather at the moment because you will soon be back to your best.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
If you feel the need to cut yourself off from those around you over the next few days then do so. It may seem rude but good manners are less important now than getting your head in the right place.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Your recent hard work has not gone unnoticed. People are impressed by your attitude and there could be a promotion coming your way in the near future.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
The Sun crosses the career angle of your chart on Sunday, so it won't be long before you get the chance to move up in the world. But don't be tempted to cut corners.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You may think you need to rip everything up and start again from scratch. But it isn't true and in fact would be a backward step. The good times will start in a matter of days, so be patient.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You have spent far too much in recent weeks and if you carry on there may be nothing left. The good news is you will discover a new source of income very soon.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
By the time the Sun enters your opposite sign of Aries on Sunday you should know for certain if a relationship is going to last or if it is best to go your separate ways.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
The Sun's move into the work area of your chart in just a few days means you may need to take on new chores and responsibilities. But know when to say "no" — and mean it.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Certain events may have upset you but there is no point dwelling on them. In a matter of days they will no longer matter. The Sun's change of signs on the 20th will cheer you up to no end.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
The more you have been rushing here, there and everywhere in recent weeks, the more you must slow down and focus on matters closer to home. Give your full attention to partners and loved ones.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
The past few weeks have not been easy but you stuck at your task and very soon you will get your reward. The pendulum is about to swing in your favour.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
By all means show sympathy for someone who is finding the going tough at the moment, and do what you can to help them.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

	2				8		5	
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		4		3				8
	3				9		7	
8								4
	6		5				2	

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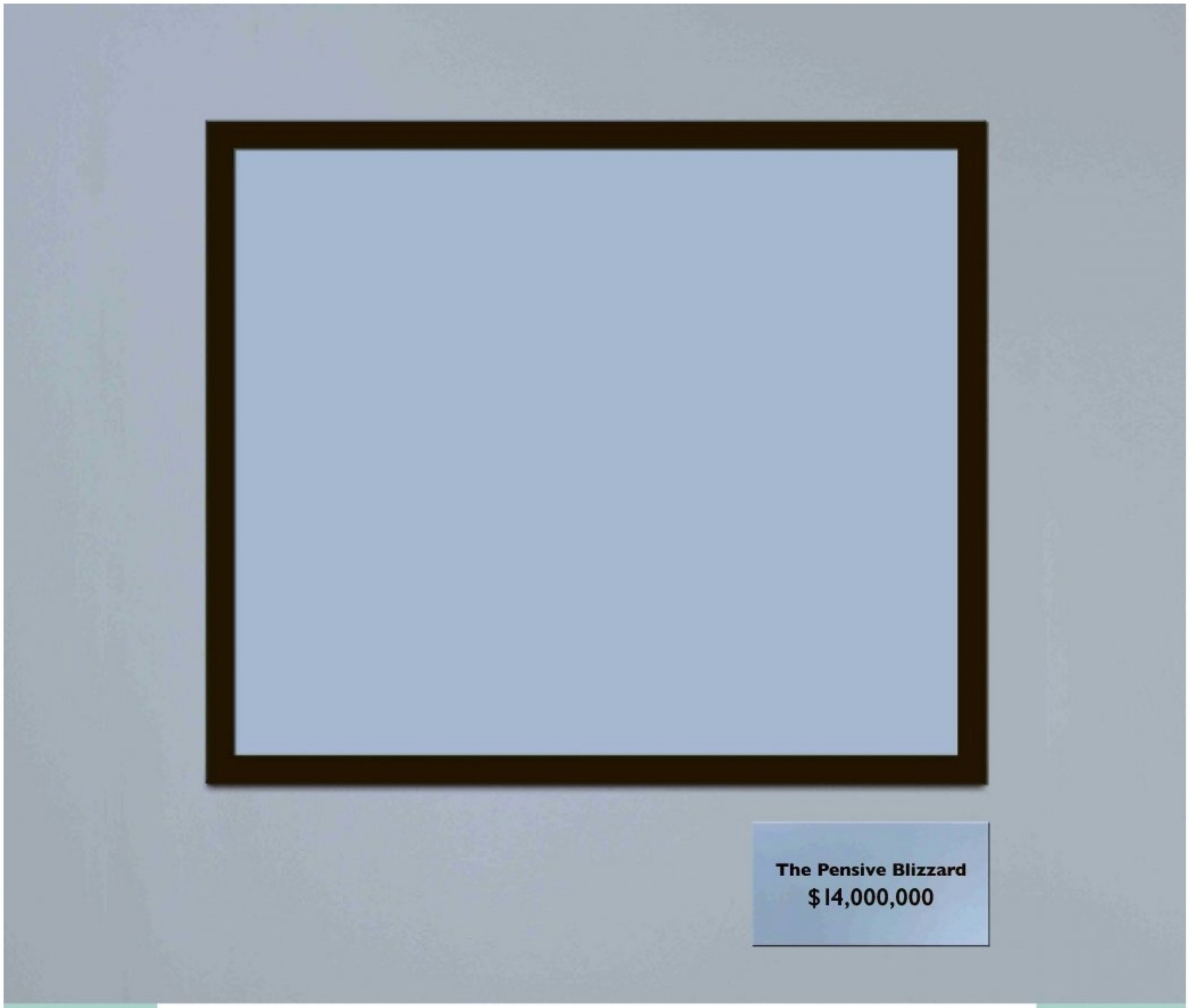

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What makes a luxury car

LEATHER, WOOD INTERIORS

Premium vehicles traditionally introduce high-end features

Jil McIntosh

Just about everyone loves luxury, and there's plenty of that to see at the Calgary International Auto & Truck Show. But just what defines a luxury vehicle?

In the earliest days of the automobile, cars were an expensive luxury, even if they were very plain. But as they became more reliable and prices came down, a market opened specifically for luxury cars. These usually had larger engines, fancier styling, and more opulent interiors, as compared to cheaper models.

That's often still the case, with vehicles such as the Maserati Quattroporte, with its jewel-like knurled control knobs and soft leather trim, or the all-new Lincoln Continental and its thirty-way power-adjustable seats. Luxury can also meet top-notch performance in vehicles like the Ferrari 488 GTB, with its 660-horsepower twin-turbo V8, or Lamborghini's Huracán Spyder, with its 10-cylinder engine.

But luxury isn't just about how much leather and wood can be added to a vehicle. Premium vehicles have traditionally introduced higher-end features, most of which initially start out as expensive add-ons, primarily because of their high development costs. As sales volume increased and the price came down, these features started to show up on less-expensive vehicles. Such things that we take for granted on almost all cars, such as power windows or heated mirrors, were originally reserved for high-end vehicles, along with more recent features, including automatic climate control, navigation, heated seats, and heated steering wheels, which are found on many moderately-priced models.

The Calgary show includes cars from Rolls-Royce, considered the epitome of extravagance, as well as the Genesis G90, the first model from Hyundai's new Genesis luxury brand. But if "full luxury" is a little too much for your wallet, look at some of the "mid-luxe" vehicles on display: Well-appointed models from mainstream manufacturers, such as the Toyota Avalon, Kia K900, or all-new Buick LaCrosse. There's something for everyone at the show.

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Ford Raptor. FORD

What's new in trucks

Honda Ridgeline. JIL MCINTOSH/FOR METRO

OFF-ROAD UPGRADES

Lots of new features added to 2016 models

Jil McIntosh

The Ottawa Gatineau International Auto Show may be a car event, but Canadians also love trucks. Here are some of the newest models available for those who prefer a truck bed in the back, rather than a trunk.

The Ford F-150 is essentially unchanged for 2016, but two all-new trucks will arrive later this year as 2017 models: the Super Duty and Raptor. As with the F-150, both will use an aluminum body and high-strength-steel frame. The Super Duty will feature gasoline and diesel engines, while the Raptor will use a turbocharged V6 engine that's more powerful and efficient than the V8 engine it replaces.

General Motors makes several exterior styling changes and adds some new features to its full-size Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra. On select trim lines, the available 5.3-litre V8 now uses an eight-speed automatic transmission. The midsize Chevrolet Colorado and GMC Canyon can now be ordered with a 2.8-litre Duramax turbodiesel engine, in addition to a four-cylinder or V6 gasoline engine.

Honda recently presented the Canadian debut of its all-new 2017 Ridgeline. While it retains its unibody construction and 3.5-litre V6 engine, its styling is now more that of a conventional pickup. Its in-bed locking truck and two-way tailgate remain, but for the first time, it will be available in front-wheel drive as well as all-wheel drive, and will offer an available industry-first, in-bed audio system.

Nissan debuts the all-new Titan XD, which bridges the gap between light-duty and heavy-duty trucks. Carrying a Cummins 5.0-litre V8 diesel engine, the Titan XD can tow up to 12,000 lbs. when properly equipped. It will be followed soon by the all-new Titan half-ton, which will ride on its own chassis and be powered by a choice of V6 or V8 gasoline engines.

Ram undergoes some minor styling changes for 2016, including a new centre console, and unique grille styling on its two new trim levels, the Laramie Limited and Rebel. As before, the Ram 1500 offers an available 3.0-litre diesel engine in addition to gasoline choices.

Toyota has an all-new Tacoma for 2016, with new styling, more capability, and an off-road package with crawl control. Its available, segment-first 3.5-litre V6 engine automatically and seamlessly adjusts its valve timing to a fuel-saving Atkinson cycle when full power isn't needed. The full-size Tundra gains a new TRD Pro Series off-road trim level, with exclusive remote reservoir suspension kit, dual exhaust, skid plate, 18-inch black alloy wheels, premium stereo, and unique TRD interior trim.

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Auto

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Why aren't self-driving cars here yet?

TAKE THE WHEEL

Technology in the works, but checkpoints need to be met

Jil McIntosh

The roads of tomorrow will be considerably different than those of today, with cars that can drive themselves. We've been hearing about them for quite a while now, so why are they taking so long?

Much of the issue isn't in the cars themselves, but in the various technologies that have to develop with them. Cars that can react to other vehicles are already here, but it's going to take far more before they can think for themselves.

Many cars already have cruise control that keeps a pre-set distance from vehicles ahead; lane departure mitigation that detects road lines and steers between them; and automatic emergency braking. Using these, some cars currently on the market can pilot themselves, although the law requires you to take over after a few seconds.

They're impressive, but can only do so much. They don't know to stop for red lights, and they can't function if road markings are worn or covered with snow.

Navigation systems will have to be far more accurate than they are now. "We need to know how many lines are on the road, how many lanes there are, and twenty-centimetre accuracy where an exit starts and where it ends," says Harold Goddijn, president and CEO of navigation company TomTom. "We need all that to give the computer in the car the information to accurately plan its next manoeuvre, and know where it is and where it's heading."

Cars will have to communicate with infrastructure, as well as with each other, a technology known as Vehicle to Vehicle (V2V). While fixed structures such as traffic lights will only send signals to cars close by, V2V allows cars to pass messages down the line. If there's a traffic issue, for example, the message could be relayed by each car in turn, warning those far away to select a different route.

Vehicles would also have to continually self-diagnose, and that includes the tires. A car that's braking itself has to know how much traction it has, or it could potentially slide past its intended stopping point. Pirelli is developing a "Cyber Tire" that can measure the grip it has and relay the information to the car's sensors to ensure that it slows and stops in time. It's just one of numerous technologies that will have to be in place before your car takes you to your destination all by itself.

Google's self-driving car is seen during a demonstration at the Google campus in Mountain View, Calif. The redefinition of "driver" is an important break for Google. TONY AVELAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DEVELOPING

Freightliner is currently testing a self-driving tractor-trailer that would allow drivers to take a break on long, straight highway stretches.

Since many people suffer from motion sickness, automakers are researching seat design, window size, and information screens to help prevent drivers from becoming carsick when they're sitting in self-driving cars.

Change your driving habits to reduce fuel consumption. ISTOCK

How to improve fuel economy

From hybrid technologies to electric cars, from lightweight materials to new engine developments, automakers are constantly trying to squeeze better fuel economy out of their vehicles.

Not only do they have to meet government fuel efficiency and emissions standards, but it's an important factor for many consumers when they're shopping for vehicles as well.

But even if you're not in the market for something new, you can still make a dent in your fuel purchases. While we like to think of ourselves as good drivers, the reality is that almost all of us could get even better fuel efficiency, no matter what we drive, by changing some of our driving habits. Try these out and prepare to sail past the gas station more often than you do now.

Vision is important
Always look ahead as far as you can, right to the horizon if possible.

You'll see stopped or turning vehicles well in advance, potentially giving you the opportunity to smoothly change lanes and go around them, rather than stopping and starting again.

Accelerate moderately
Your vehicle uses the most fuel when moving from a stop, and punching the throttle requires even more. Smooth acceleration uses less fuel and helps reduce wear and tear on vehicle components.

Coast whenever you can
Rather than keep your foot on the throttle until it's time to brake for red lights, take it off and decelerate to the stop. It'll help make your brakes last longer, too.

Check your tire pressure
Underinflated tires don't roll as easily, and they use more fuel. Check them at least once a month, using the recommended pressure that you'll find on a label inside the door jamb or in your owner's manual.

Don't go by the number on the tire, which is the maximum pressure the tire can hold.

Un-junk the trunk
Don't carry more than you need. It takes extra fuel to move that extra weight around.

That includes snow, too: cleaning heavy accumulation off your car is not only safer but can help save fuel.

Stay smooth on the throttle
If you're constantly on-the-gas, off-the-gas, on-the-gas when trying to maintain your speed, you're using a lot of that gas.

You're also annoying your passengers. JIL MCINTOSH

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This weekend's event features the latest models of sports cars, luxury vehicles, and trucks and SUVs. CONTRIBUTED

Auto show rolls into Ottawa

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Check out lots of makes and models before going to a dealer

Jil McIntosh

If you love cars, you'll want to visit the Ottawa Gatineau International Auto Show. Whether you're thinking of buying a new vehicle or just like to look, this is the place to be.

The show covers three levels of the Shaw Centre and features new vehicles from all of the major manufacturers, along with speciality companies such as Tesla, Aston Martin and Rolls-Royce, and exotics from Pagani Automobili.

New this year is the Motorcycle Showcase, produced by the Ottawa International Motorcycle Show. It includes all of the major motorcycle manufacturers, as well as accessories and apparel to suit riders from novice to expert.

Fans of fast will want to visit the Motorsport Showcase on Level 2. There you'll find displays from several teams and facilities in Ontario and Quebec, including the Le Circuit Quyon kart course, the Motorsport Club of Ottawa, Carlton University's Ravens Racing Team, and Calabogie Motorsports Park.

And be sure to check out the various displays and contests going on during the show. You could win $5,000 from Mantha Insurance, $500 to use for the purchase of a new vehicle, or a year's lease of a Mini Clubman.

So why visit? While you can't test-drive any of the vehicles, it's a great opportunity to see all of the new models under one roof, without any sales pressure. This is your chance to check out seat comfort, ease of access, interior space, and cargo capacity. Use your phone to take photos so you can compare them later, and bring a pencil to make notes.

Check all the seating positions, and how easy it is to get in and out — an important consideration if you regularly carry young passengers, or those with limited mobility. Make sure you have full visibility all around, that you can reach all the controls, and there's room for all the stuff you take on your commute.

By checking out all of the contenders in the segment you're considering, you can figure out which ones make the "final cut" on your test-drive list, which can save you a great deal of time when you're buying.

AUTO SHOW DETAILS

The Ottawa Gatineau International Auto Show takes place on Thursday, March 17 to Sunday, March 20 at the Shaw Centre (formerly the Ottawa Convention Centre). Hours are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. through Saturday; and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Limited underground parking is available at the Shaw Centre, with entrances located on Daly Avenue and Nicholas Street South. Parking is also available at the Rideau Centre and in the Byward Market. On weekends and evenings after 6 p.m., you can park at Ottawa City Hall (114 Laurier Avenue West) for a maximum rate of $3.75.

Tickets at the door are $18 for adults, $16 for youth and seniors, and $7 for children 6 and older (free for 5 and younger). A family pass is $40. You can save $3 on each adult, youth or senior ticket, and avoid lineups, by buying online at AutoShowOttawa.com.

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THE FAST AND THE CURIOUS

Ottawa Gatineau International Auto Show • March 17-20 • Shaw Centre

INSIDE: What's in store for trucks in 2016, the evolution of luxury, and more

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